

ARTICULATED ELECTROSURGICAL PROBE**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Systems, apparatus and methods for selectively applying electrical energy to

5 body tissue in order to ablate, contract, coagulate, or otherwise modify a target tissue or organ of a patient. An electrosurgical apparatus of the invention includes a shaft having an articulated electrode support at a distal end of the shaft, the electrode support bearing an active electrode on an inferior surface of the electrode support, a return electrode in the form of a tube, and an electrically insulating return tube tray affixed to the tube, the tube adapted for delivering an electrically conductive fluid between the active electrode and the return electrode. The probe can adopt a closed configuration or an open configuration. The closed configuration is adapted for clamping, coagulating, and ablating a target tissue while the apparatus is operating in a sub-ablation mode, while the open configuration is adapted for severing the target tissue via molecular dissociation of tissue components.

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